

Spot Checking

Food ★ Fun ★ Frolic
By Bill Whitman



Just Around the Corner

What's just around the corner? Why Easter, that's what 'cause next Sunday's Palm Sunday and it just seems to follow, that's all. And then of course watch out for Tuesday. That's All Fool's Day and no, that doesn't let you out!

They'll have it all laid out for you at the **Hotel International** at Century and Sepulveda in all their dining rooms. The **Penthouse Restaurant**, the **Hunt Room** and the **Coffee Shop**.

The **Penthouse** will serve from 2 'til 10 p.m. at \$4.95 and up. In the **Hunt Room** it'll be from 3 'til 9 p.m. from \$3.95 with a special brunch from 9:30 a.m. 'til 2:30 p.m. at \$2.95.

A special Sunrise Breakfast will be served in the **Coffee Shop** from 6 in the a.m. 'til 12:30 p.m. and complete dinners from 12:30 'til 9 p.m. at the fancy price of \$2.95. Special children's plates will be offered from \$1.95. These, of course, are all starting prices.

And, before we forget it, the **New Raffles Restaurant** which just moved to Downey will be holding its grand opening in the new store Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, April 11, 12, and 13.

New home for **The Raffles** is

located at 7339 E. Florence Ave. An easy shot from either Torrance or Leimert Park, the former cite of **Raffles**. In fact, it's an easy shot from just about anywhere in Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, the crying towels were out en masse last Saturday for the bon voyage get together on Degnan with Auld Lang Syne being bellowed to the roof tops 'til far into the night. And why not, after 25 years of fine dining and fun things. So pick up where you left off Saturday and visit the new spot regularly. A truly easy deal for folks like Roy and Evelyn Swift on their way to the mountains. And of course Doc Fisher's looking forward to aiming his new "bomb" in that direction.

You'll all feel right at home 'cause all of Ward's staff are moving out there with him.

Stopped by **The Matador** on West Pico Boulevard one nite last week—think it was Saturday—and it's amazing how the good people of Los Angeles flock to Bill Fremont's exciting little (little?) dinery. There seems to be no end to the streams of hungry customers seeking the good and authentic foods-of-Spain offered here.

There's never too long a wait, the turn-over's that great 'cause the waiters are that efficient. But in the event you do have to wait a few minutes, there's always the comfortable and ample bar attended by the fast and efficient bartender, Kiki, to fix your "favorite" while you wait.

And waiter extraordinaire, Julius Capus Hope was passing out the cigars at a great rate one nite not long ago. No, it wasn't him—he had become a granddaddy and was so proud he felt he wanted to do something about it. That's the kind of a guy he is!

Then for you Flamenco buffs, Jesus (pronounced "Haysus") is back at the bar downstairs following his bout with Mr. Flu and is mixing things up again for you in high fashion.

And hey, with the May and June social season rapidly approaching, you might keep in mind the new **Del Prado Room** that Mr. Fremont has available for your wedding and graduation parties that are bound to come along in these ensuing months.

The picturesque **Del Prado Room of The Matador** can accommodate parties of from 10 to 60 persons at one sitting, with the spectacular Flamenco floor show of Spanish entertainment. And dinners start at \$2.95.

That's a personable trio they've got down at the **Pen & Quill** in Manhattan Beach. They're known as the Bel Aires and have played just about any place you might mention in this tired old world.

The Bel Aires have just completed an extensive engagement in Las Vegas and now wowing 'em at the **Pen & Quill**. They're a very danceable as well as listenable group so if you're planning an evening "on the town" so to speak, remember the **Pen & Quill** for superb dining and entertainment. Wanta make a reservation? Just call 772-2537 and they'll handle things from there. Okay?

Say now, that Chef's Special they're offering at the **New Harborlight Restaurant** in San Pedro is really something. Sneaked in there one nite last week for a close look-see and was delightfully surprised. Had heard a lot about it so decided to give it a whirl. So you try it.

In the first place, this is one of the most enchanting dinner spots in the area with just plain good food simply pouring from both the menu and the kitchen. Add to this, the spectacular view offered you at **The Harborlight** with the panoramic shot of the entire Los Angeles Harbor and the majestic Vincent Thomas Bridge, and you have a most



HAWAIIAN EYES... And that's not all that's Hawaiian. But you must take a short trip to catch this beauty. (The one on the right) She's Jeannie of the **Dick Dale Show**. Dick has recently opened a new spot in the Riverside area. He's known as the King of the Surf Guitar, y'know. It's to be called **Dick Dale's**, would you believe.

memorable evening "on the town."

Call 831-0211 for reservations here.

Now then, a short cruise down the coast a ways to the Laguna Beach Country Club and you'll find **Ben Brown's Restaurant** where The Naturals are regaling the patrons

nately with their excellent dance music and entertainment.

It's a seven-day-a-week operation at **Ben Brown's** and presents one of the finest menus on the coast. And budget minded, too! See They're thinking of you and your pocket-book as well as your palate. Truly a nite to remember at **Ben Brown's**.

Through the efforts of Maynard Sloate, they've added a new attraction to the highly successful **Folies Bergere** at the **Hotel Tropicana** in Las Vegas.

It's a former California school teacher turned ventriloquist who works with a flopped rag dog to brighten the scene.

Fred Roby is a veteran Swiss master of European ventriloquists and his curvy and groovy Poupee (means "doll" you savage!) Bocar stop the show nite. And they'll be there for a three-month stand.

A graduate of the University of San Diego, Roby brings his 5'7" Italian-Peruvian beauty (36-21-35) to **The Tropicana** following a brilliant tour of England and Europe including the Palladium in London and the Lido in Paris.

The punny conversation with his stuffed, shy, wide-eyed, dour-faced poupee is entrancing. Catch this act. You'll like it!

That's quite an array of entertainment **Sam Falla** has down there at his **San Franciscan Restaurant**. Something going most of the time.

Like for instance, on Sundays and Mondays it's **Sonny Knight** regaling the customers at the piano bar then Tuesday, The Playmates take over and play through Saturday.

Featured with The Playmates it's little **Miss Sex-On-The-Sax** herself, **Ivy Black** and man, can she blow that horn!

And you can't do much better in the food department than right there at the **San Franciscan**. That choice prime rib at a buck ninety-five is hard to top. Then speaking of top—there's also the choice top sirloin steak at the same price.

So like he y on down there some nite soon. You'll find the entertainment and the cuisine



SAN FRANCISCAN PLAYMATES... Left to right above it's Wayne Rucker at the piano, Andy Dexter, guitar and, front, Dick James on bass at the **San Franciscan Restaurant and Cocktail Lounge**, Tuesday through Saturday. They're the Playmates and turn out some fine music.

delightful. In fact you might even find Sam himself quite delightful if you catch him on his good day!

Got by **The Royal Giraffe Restaurant** in the **Torrance Ramada Inn** last Thursday nite and what a feast that **John Gregory** does place before you. To merely say superb would be putting it mildly and you have over 40 delectable entrees from which to choose. And one seems to top the other in choiceness.

Then for some of the most danceable and listenable music we've heard, get a load of that one man band they've got down there. **Phil Porreca** puts out more music than we've heard in some time for just a single. A real swinger with some great sounds.

Anyway, the things that **John Gregory** has done to that room to transform it into the **Royal Giraffe** is astounding. He's gone completely giraffe happy with the long necked ones everywhere you look, even the big monster in the lobby. The menus are covered with them, too, as well as in every nook and cranny in the big attractive room.

Prices at the **Royal Giraffe** start at \$3.25 including a

choice of soup or salad. This newest addition to the Torrance scene is at 4111 W. Pacific Coast Hwy.

Heard from **Ted Meisenheimer** last Monday. He's the "guy in charge" as far as advertising and publicity goes for the new **Reuben-Cocco Restaurant**.

Ted says that hopefully this new Torrance spot will be partially open by April 14—the **Cocco** part of it which is basically the coffee-shop end of the new Torrance spot on Hawthorne Boulevard. The dinner house side will probably open about a week or 10 days later. So this gives you something new in the area to which to look forward.

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